

2015 Wisconsin Federal Funding Conference

Session Descriptions

Tentative Agenda: <http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/wisegrants/pdf/fedcon-fy-15-ta-agenda.pdf>

Using Federal Funds to Promote Excellence for All (Tuesday, General Session)

One of Wisconsin's greatest strengths is the growing diversity of communities, schools, and workplaces. Diversity makes businesses more innovative and competitive, and a more diverse workforce leads to economic growth, opportunities, and progress.

State Superintendent Tony Evers commissioned a task force of Wisconsin educators in spring of 2014 to identify classroom-centered best practices that can address Wisconsin's achievement gaps.

This general session will provide data regarding our achievement gaps, how this impacts our state both in the present and future, and how the federal funds received by school districts should be used to address this critical issue.

Overview of the Omni Circular (Tuesday, General Session)

Are you ready for the Omni Circular? Do you know how it will impact your school district or 2r charter school? The Office of Management and Budgets (OMB) streamlined the Federal Government's guidance on administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements for federal awards. These changes will impact all fiscal year 2015-16 grants. This session will provide participants with an in-depth look at the changes to the time and effort reporting requirement, which addresses the largest cost (personnel) charged to federal grants.

Introduction to Title I, Part A Funding (Tuesday)

Title I is a federal program that provides funds to school districts and schools with high percentages of children from low-income families to support a variety of services to students struggling to meet state academic achievement standards. This session will provide participants with information on how Title I grant allocations are determined and when and how the funds can be used in the school district.

Introduction to IDEA Funding (Tuesday)

Funds under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are provided to school districts on an entitlement basis for programs and services to children with disabilities. In general, the grant is to support the excess cost of providing special education instruction and related services.

This session will provide the participants with information on how IDEA grant allocations are determined and when and how the funds may be used. There will be a focus on allowed costs and some common funding errors that have occurred.

Introduction to Title II, Part A Funding (Tuesday)

Title II is a federal program that provides funds to eligible school districts for training, hiring, and retaining skilled educators. School districts are required to target funds to schools that have the lowest proportion of highly qualified teachers, the largest average class size, or are identified for improvement. This session will provide participants with information on how Title II grant allocations are determined and when and how the funds can be used by the school districts.

Wisconsin Uniform Financial Accounting Requirements (WUFAR) 101 (Tuesday)

This section will present basics on WUFAR and is meant for program staff or new business staff. All school districts in Wisconsin must submit financial reports, including grant budgets and claims, to DPI using the state's established school district accounting coding system. This session will break down the codes so that program staff can understand the structure and the importance of understanding this reporting requirement. Program staff will learn what pieces matter to the program and how having this knowledge, along with communication between the program and business office, will improve the school district's management of funds. If you are a seasoned fiscal staff person, this session will be an introduction to WUFAR and will provide information already well known to those staff who work with WUFAR on a regular basis. The session will consist of 40 minutes of presentation and a 20 minute hands-on activity in which teams are provided funding scenarios and WUFAR account strings, and participants must fit the pieces together. This is the same activity that was done at the 2014 Federal Funding Conference.

Property and Procurement Regulations Under the Omni Circular (Tuesday)

School districts receiving federal funds, including IDEA and Title I funds, must comply with federal procurement regulations when purchasing goods and services with those funds. These rules were significantly altered under the Omni Circular. This presentation will explain procurement and property management rules under the Omni Circular, including new purchasing thresholds, required written procedures and mandatory reporting. The Omni Circular also addresses property such as computers as well sharing equipment among programs. This session will be relevant to both business and program area staff.

Title I Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Programs (Tuesday)

Title I schools are either Title I "Schoolwide" or "Targeted Assistance." Title I Schoolwide programs have great latitude to determine how to organize their operations and allocation the multiple funding sources available to them. Title I Schoolwide programs also gain flexibility in other federal funding programs such as IDEA. Unlike a schoolwide program, Title I funds in a Targeted Assistance school must be used to improve the academic achievement of identified Title I students. This session will review the differences between the two programs and provide examples of allowable cost of each program type.

Funding Pupil Transportation (Tuesday)

Pupil Transportation aid comes from many different sources, with many different rules, reimbursement calculations, and monitoring. A panel of content experts will provide an overview of transportation funding provisions, how these provisions are audited or monitored, and how program requirements intersect with day to day practical applications. Transportation as it relates to all students, students who require specialized transportation (IEPs and 504 plans), and the McKinney-Vento provision (students who are homeless) will be discussed in terms of general aid, state special education categorical aid, Title I, and IDEA grants reimbursement.

Use of Title I Reservations (Tuesday)

School districts may reserve funds from the Title I allocation before targeting funds to eligible Title I school attendance areas. Participants will learn about the different reservations, when they may be used, and allowable costs associated with each reservation.

Allowable Costs Under the Omni Circular (Tuesday and Wednesday)

The Omni Circular identifies 55 selected items of cost as either allowed or disallowed when using federal grant funds. The speakers will review the cost items in the Omni Circular that relate to the Title I and IDEA grants, and address frequently asked allowability questions, such as student incentives.

Introduction to IDEA Maintenance of Effort Requirements (Tuesday)

A complicated and complex topic, this session will break down the IDEA regulation that requires school districts to maintain local spending amounts on special education in exchange for the IDEA grant funds. During these difficult economic times, it is vital that all school district staff understand this requirement and how seemingly unconnected decisions may impact a school district's IDEA MOE level.

Title I and Title II Equitable Participation for Private School Students (Tuesday)

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides educational services and benefits to private school students and educational personnel. The facilitators for this session will explain the provisions in the law for serving private school students and staff under Titles I and II including the similarities and differences between the two Titles. They will also provide an overview of the documentation required under ESEA.

Resources to Meet the Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness (Tuesday)

Children and youth experiencing homelessness face many challenging issues on a daily basis. This session will identify federal resources, as well as best practices that help school districts remove barriers in order to ensure students experiencing homelessness have the opportunity to fully participate in their education. In addition, this session will explore frequently asked questions pertaining to the overlap of McKinney-Vento and IDEA.

Developing a Plan to Support Student Achievement (Tuesday, General Session)

This session will provide strategies school district and school leaders can utilize to maximize grant funds to meet the growing needs of students.

DPI's Fiscal Monitoring Risk Assessment and Monitoring Plan (Wednesday, General Session)

Even though your school district may no longer be required to have a federal single audit performed, there are monitoring requirements placed on the state. The Omni Circular includes requirements for pass-through entities to evaluate each subrecipient's risk of noncompliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and terms and conditions of the subaward for purposes of determining the appropriate subrecipient monitoring. This session will focus on how DPI plans to meet these monitoring requirements. It will discuss the risk factors used in evaluating a sub-recipient and how the evaluation of those risk factors is used in determining the appropriate level of monitoring per sub-recipient.

Fiscal Management of Federal Funds (Wednesday)

Every sub-recipient of a Federal award is required to have a financial management system that is sufficient to determine that such funds have been used according to the Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. This session will focus on the fiscal management required of every school district receiving federal funds such as identification of the award, accounting systems, internal controls, safeguarding of assets, written procedures for determining allowability of costs, budget controls, supporting documentation, and reporting.

Fiscal Management of Federal Funds for Independent (2R) Charter Schools (Wednesday)

This session will discuss the same financial management requirements covered in the Fiscal Management of Federal Funds session but with a greater focus on a 2r Independent Charter School.

IDEA Equitable Participation for Private School Students (Wednesday)

School districts are responsible for setting aside a portion of their IDEA allocation to provide special education instruction and related services to students with disabilities who are placed in private schools by their parents. This session will review how to determine the amount that must be set-aside, how it is budgeted and accounted for, and how the funds must be spent. A discussion will take place on how this requirement will be monitored by DPI.

ESEA Monitoring Guidance and Procedures (Wednesday)

Federal law requires DPI to monitor programming and implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requirements, Title specific requirements and fiduciary requirements. In the summer of 2014, DPI updated the ESEA on-site monitoring document and overhauled the monitoring procedures. Attend this session to learn about the new process which uses technology, is less confusing, and is more efficient for both school districts and DPI. This session will be beneficial for those new to or extremely familiar with ESEA grants as it will provide participants an understanding of the school district's requirements under ESEA.

How IDEA Funds Can Support General Education (Wednesday)

This session will provide an overview of two very flexible funding options available under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: the Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) and Title I Schoolwide set-asides. Under the Title I Schoolwide set-aside option, school districts with Title I Schoolwide schools are allowed to set aside a portion of their IDEA grant to support activities, not just special education, in a Title I Schoolwide program. Under the CEIS option, all school districts that receive an IDEA allocation are allowed to use a portion of their grant to fund academic or behavioral interventions for students without disabilities. This session will review how to determine the amounts that may be set-aside, how it is budgeted and accounted for, and how the funds may be spent.

Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements and the Impact on Federal Funds (Wednesday)

Several federal grants require school districts to only hire highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. This session will help school districts understand what documentation is needed to show that staff are highly qualified, what happens if this requirement is not met, and how this requirement impacts federal funds.

ESEA Maintenance of Effort and Title I Comparability Requirements (Wednesday)

Federal law states that a school district may receive its full allocation of Title I, Part A funds for any fiscal year only if the DPI determines that the school district maintained its fiscal effort. The law goes on to say that services provided with state and local funds in Title I schools must be comparable to non-Title I schools. This session will provide an overview of Title I Maintenance of Effort (MOE) and Comparability requirements including what is required and how the requirements are determined.

Introduction to Carl E. Perkins Funding (Wednesday)

Carl Perkins is a federal program designed to develop more fully the academic and career and technical skills of secondary education students and postsecondary education students who elect to enroll in career and technical education programs. Federal funding is distributed between DPI and Wisconsin

Technical College System. This session will discuss the purpose of Carl Perkins, the distribution of funds, the permissible use of funds, and meeting the core indicators of performance.

Introduction to WISEgrants (Wednesday)

DPI staff are very excited to unveil WISEgrants, the new federal grants management system. In 2015-16, ESEA and IDEA formula grants will be accessed through this portal, with other federal program and discretionary grants to follow. The system has been designed to meet the needs of the school districts, focusing on a one-stop shop accessing assurances, grant award documents, budgets and claims. A goal of WISEgrants is to give school districts an accessible way to view their district-wide federally funded programs to support blended activities and future compliance requirements.

Indirect Cost Recovery and Federal Funds (Wednesday)

The total cost of operating a program that receives federal funding includes items like utilities, IT support, bookkeeping, human resources – anything and everything necessary to keep the organization itself up and running. When expenses are shared among programs, or among functions within the organization (e.g., management, accounting, phone communications), they are defined as indirect costs. Tracking and recovering these costs are among the biggest challenges for a school district. This session will review how indirect cost rates for school districts are established, what costs are or should be covered as indirect, and when an item qualifies as an indirect cost versus a direct cost.

Using Federal Funds to Serve Students who are English Learners

Rural, suburban, and urban school districts across Wisconsin are enrolling students who are English Learners (ELs) in increasing numbers. Educators and school/district administrators need to know the resources available to serve this diverse population and the requirements governing those resources. This session will focus on how school districts can use funds from Title I and Title III to meet the needs of students who are ELs and the documentation required under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).